(c) what is the estimated cost of the linkage project; and

(d) whether the World Bank's assistance is proposed to be sought for this work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P. K. THUNGON): (a) to (d) A National Prespective for water Resources Development prepared by Government envisages inter-linkages between various Peninsular rivers and Himalayan rivers separately for transfer of water from water rich basins to water short basins for optimum utilisation of water resources. Government has established National Water Development Agency (NWDA) in 1982 for firming up these proposals. A total of 36 water transfer links, 17 under Peninsular component and 19 under Himalayan component have been identified by NWDA.

While office studies of 12 links under Peninsular component have been completed, studies of balance Peninsular links and all links under Himalayan component have been included in VIII Plan. In addition, investigation of 9 links of Peninsular component and 3 links of Himalayan component have been included in the VIII Plan Programme of the Agency. In the absence of detailed project reports the cost aspect and its source of funding cannot be firmed up.

Extent of Water-Logged and Saline Areas in the Country

230. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Desai, ex-Advisor to the Planning Commission to identify the extent of waterlogged and saline areas in irrigated command in the country;

(b) what are the recommendations of the Committee the remedial measures suggested by it;

(c) whether the Desai Committees report has been published by Government; and

(d) whether the recommendations of the Committee have been accepted by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P. K. THUNGON): (a) The Working Group was set up under the Chairmanship of Shri C. G. Desai, Adviser (I&CAD), Planning Commission with representatives from Ministry of Agriculture, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Central Ground Water Board, Central Water Commission and Command Area Development Wing of the Ministry of Water Resources to identify the problem areas affected by water-logging/salinity/alkalinity in existing irrigation projects in the country based on available data and to suggest suitable remedial measures for tackling the problem.

(b) The Working Group inter-alia recommended preventive and remedial measures which included mainly monitoring of ground water levels and excess salt consideration, maintaining drainage network and providing drainage system, wherever necessory, in the command areas.

(c) and (d) The report of the Working Group have been circulated to the States and other concerned Ministries/Organisations inviting their views for taking necessary steps on the recommendations made by the Working Group.

Water Scarcity

231. SHRI GHUFRAN AZEM: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Governments attention has been drawn to a news item captioned "Massive water scarcity predicted" as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 8-11-93;

(b) if so, whether a study conducted by Population Action International, it has been revealed that by the year 2025 there would be chronic water scarcity; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P. K. THUNGON) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The report on the study conducted by the population Action International has not been received by the Government and is being obtained.

Main Features of Adoption Laws

232. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SRARMA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the main features of the laws that govern the adoption of a child by the needy parents of the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that many needy parents have represented to the Government about their dissatisfaction over the multiplicity of rules and difficulties being faced in the process of adopting a child; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take to streamline the procedure in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI) : (a) There is no uniform law to regulate adoptions in this country. Hindus can adopt a child through a religious ceremony or under Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 while others can take a child under their guardianship in terms of the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890. Main features of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 and Guardian and Wards Act 1890 are annexed as statement (*See below*).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Statement

Main features of the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890

The Guardians & Wards Act of 1890 has come into existence since Ist July, 1890 and applies to the whole of India except the States of Jammu & Kashmir. This law does not use the term 'Adoption' because it does not visualize a permanent contract. It is meant for those who according to their religion cannot adopt children. It allows them to look after a child for a limited period. A a child being looked after does not have any right like a natural child, the law does not set any limit on the number of children any one can look after or does not insist on the difference of age between the child and the guardian. There is no conflict between the natural children and children under guardianship. There can be many children taken under guardianship at one time, but each child has to be under twenty one.

Applications for Guardianship can be made in District Courts. Applications should be accompanied by a home-study report by a social worker. The act provides legal custody for a limited period. On the 21st birthday of the child, the contract ends, and the child and the guardian have no claim over each other. Experts advise guardians to take out an insurance policy so that the child is not left unprovided for at the age of twenty-one. This is a recommendation and not a legal compulsion. It is a good idea that guardians should give a child some economic stability at the beginning when he is still getting settled in life. Some guardians provide gifts or a share in the property in the will they make. This depends on the kind of relationship they develop. Any person who can offer protection to a child and his property can apply for guardianship. He has to submit an application in which he has to state the child's name, sex, religion, date of birth, his usual residence, and if there is any property belonging to the child—its location, and the estimated value of the property. If a child has parents and close relatives, then he